

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 FEA-01 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01

CIAE-00 CIEP-01 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07 FPC-01 H-01

INR-07 INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-04

USIA-06 OES-06 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 ACDA-07

/110 W

-----121224Z 016591 /23-12

R 120725Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0955

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 0311

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, AF

SUBJ: AFGHAN OIL DISCOVERY

REF: 76 KABUL 8965 (NOTAL)

1. DURING MY JANUARY 8 CALL ON "DE FACTO" FOREIGN MINISTER WAHEED ABDULLAH, I ASKED HIM FOR FURTHER DETAILS REGARDING THE NEW OIL STRIKE IN NORTHWEST AFGHANISTAN (REFTEL). AFTER REMINDING ME THAT THIS MATTER IS STILL A "STATE SECRET," ABDULLAH CONFIRMED THAT AFGHAN GEOLOGISTS HAD INDEED FOUND A DOME NEAR BAND-E-GUNDOW (NEAR BAND-E-SABZAK ON THE BORDER BETWEEN HERAT AND BADGHIS PROVINCES). ALTHOUGH TWO MORE YEARS MAY BE NEEDED FULLY TO ASSESS THE FIND, WHICH WAS STRUCK AT A DEPTH OF 900 METERS, PRESENT ESTIMATES ARE THAT THE DEPOSIT IS ABOUT NINE MILLION TONS. ABDULLAH ADDED THAT SMALLER DEPOSITS HAD BEEN FOUND SOME TIME AGO NEAR ALI GUL (NORTHWEST OF QAISAR IN FARYAB PROVINCE) AND AT KASHAIR (NEAR SARI-PUL IN JAWZJAN PROVINCE). THE AFGHANS ARE HOPEFUL FOR ADDITIONAL STRIKES IN THIS ROUGH 180 KILOMETERS CRESENT  
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BETWEEN SARI-PUL IN THE EAST AND BAND-E-GANDOW IN THE WEST, WHICH THEY NOW ESTIMATE CONTAINS RESERVES OF ABOUT 30 MILLION TONS.

2. THE "DE FACTO" FOREIGN MINISTER WAS OBVIOUSLY PROUD OF THE FACT THAT THE AFGHANS HAD MADE THE FIND WITHOUT SOVIET ASSISTANCE. THE SOVIETS HAVE NOT BEEN HELPFUL, HE

SAID, SINCE THEY DO NOT NEED OIL BUT ARE ONLY INTERESTED  
IN AFGHAN NATURAL GAS.

3. COMMENT: ABDULLAH WAS SELLING SOVIET ASSISTANCE IN  
PETROLEUM EXPLORATION AND EXPLOITATION SOMEWHAT SHORT,  
SINCE THE SOVIETS HAVE FOR YEARS BEEN INVOLVED IN ALL PHASES  
OF NATURAL GAS AND PETROEUM EXPLORATION AND EXPLOITATION IN  
NORTHWEST AFGHANISTAN. MOREOVER, THE SOVIETS HAVE EXTENDED  
(IN 1972) A \$5.6 MILLION LINE OF CREDIT FOR A PETROLEUM  
REFINERY, OIL EXTRACTION IN THE SHIBERGAN AREA, AND PIPING TO THE  
ANGOT DEPOT FACILITIES. ALTHOUGH THIS CREDIT HAS NOT YET BEEN  
DRAWN DOWN, THE AFGHANS ARE COUNTING ON THIS ASSISTANCE TO  
BUILD A 200,000 TON PER YEAR REFINERY AND, AS ABDULLAH  
HIMSELF REMARKED DURING OUR CONVERSATION, THE FACT HOPE TO  
EXPAND THIS CAPACITY IN LIGHT OF THE NEW FINDS. IF AFGHAN  
ESTIMATES ARE CORRECT, THE NEW FIND WILL MORE THAN COVER  
AFGHAN DOMESTIC PETROLEUM NEEDS FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE  
(CURRENT CONSUMPTION, ESSENTIALLY ALL IMPORTED, RUNS ABOUT  
250,000 TONS PER YEAR). END COMMENT

ELIOT

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** OIL FIELDS, EXPLORATORY DRILLING, PETROLEUM RESERVES  
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**Decaption Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 76 KABUL 8965  
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**TAGS:** ENRG, AF  
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**Review Markings:**  
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